

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the third full paragraph at page 4 with the following replacement paragraph

This object is achieved by an integrated circuit according to claim 1 and a method for exchanging messages according to claim 6 [[7]].

Please replace the first full paragraph at page 11 with the following replacement paragraph

There are several points in a connection where the order of transactions can be observed: (a) the order in which the master module ~~M₁~~ presents CMD messages to the ANIP, (b) the order in which the CMDs are delivered to the slave module S1, S2 ~~T, S~~ by the PNIP, (c) the order in which the slave module S1, S2 ~~T, S~~ presents the responses to the PNIP, and (d) the order the responses are delivered to the master by the ANIP. Note that not all of (b), (c), and (d) are always present. Moreover, there are no assumptions about the order in which the slaves execute transactions; only the order of the responses can be observed. The order of the transaction execution by the slaves is considered to be a system decision, and not a part of the interconnect protocol.